ivy newsletter

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18

THIS IS THE LAST informational Newsletter you'll be receiving from this office.

Shortly after I first accepted this job, I was told in no uncertain terms by the "retiring" President that the "proper" way to run Ivy was in part based upon giving the member stations as little information about our operations as possible. I was told that our member stations could be petty and spiteful about even the most insignificant items, and that any help we tried to offer would be not only rejected, but sent back with a string of cans tied to the tail.

I rejected this out of hand. At the time of our last general meeting I went to great lengths to try to emphasize intra-network communication as a key to our future vitality. The ivy newsletter was set up as a means to this end. You can all refresh yourselves on these points by looking again at the Minutes of that meeting.

Since that time, I think I can truthfully say that a great deal of energy has gone into the collection and dissemination of information; and here we begin to see the first problem. It soon became evident that several stations objected to giving us what we considered fundamental data. This is not to say that in some cases what we asked for was not a trifle strange or even unreasonable; I think now in retrospect that it was. I apologize now as I did then, saying that we asked for purposes that seemed to us constructive, and in no case with any ulterior motive. What most amazed me was that stations were suspicious of our motives, unwilling to co-operate, and downright obstructionist in some instances.

I hate to sound even a little humble; but I still think that the vast majority of what we asked for was pertinent; and what we sent out in the way of memos, newsletters, and Minutes, of interest and even importance to all member stations.

In the past six months, I've been unable to substantiate this view. With only the barest minimum of literary exageration, I haven't received any positive reaction from any quarter about these efforts.

"OK", you say. "So this guy is looking for thanks?" No, not at all. I had conceived of my job as including this little service. I thought that after years of neglect it would be -- "nice"; or maybe even helpful and constructive if we all had current By-Laws, and some regular communication between meetings.

I thought that this would be met with some consideration and appreciative understanding by the people that it was meant to inform and involve -- you guys.

For the fourth time in almost as many Newsletters I've gotten what I consider a vicious, insensitive, and degrading reply. I've simply -- and I think the word "simply" is right because anyone this side of lunacy would do what I'm doing -- decided to call it quits with ivy newsletter. From now on, or until the Board by vote decides otherwise, I'm going to consider the informational services of the Presidential side of the Network as extra, unpaid, unappreciated, unprecedented work to be avoided at all costs. And clearly I do this only because I can't stomach the abuse I seem to be getting.

Two things should be clarified. Mark and George, who also added notes to the Newsletters, will most probably continue to use them for their own purposes. If you want to know how I handle any of the "routine" stuff that comes to my attention I'll be glad to talk about it over the phone.

The second item is meant to be explanatory, apologetic, and humble. I want to give you samples of what I'm talking about. I'm sorry to have to use real, live, quotes; but I think that some of the flavor is lost in translation otherwise.

Concerning the following paragraph of the October 12th ivy newsletter --

"One faction of IBS seems to be taking the other to court. We received some static here in New Haven, and called up the New England Regional something-or-other, a guy named John Roberts. It seems that some of the Regional heavies feel that they and the stations are getting a swift shaft from the distinguished group of officers that IBS boasts; we seem inclined to agree. Ivy is not a member of IBS per se, so all we could do was mouth some kind sentiments. You will see the complete reply I got on the back -- uncut (why do you folks at BRU and LRN have such a bad reputation?). If any of this is important to anyone, call John at the number given, or call us and tell us how you think we as a network can help."

Well, I got told a couple of things. Although I considered the whole affair as startlingly unrelated to the business of making money for Ivy stations, and as unimportant and even juvenile, I thought it constructive to pass on the whole thing to all stations -- in case it was important to anyone. I handled it as lightly and as much tongue-in-cheek as I could. I still see nothing malicious about my comments. I'm in a minority, though.

One of the replies I got was that the whole thing showed my "considerable naivite (sic)", and that "for you to print such a letter and distribute it to all IVY members shows even greater disinterest on your part in the facts of the matter."

Guilty as charged. I was, and am, "disinterested" in IBS until they get it together and help us in our primary business of selling advertising. I hustled my butt to their convention last spring to check it out, and failed to see where the distribution of free records was that much of a boon to our efforts. I'll be glad to enlarge on this view if you send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Why waste postage?

I'm willing to admit now that it did show my "considerable naivite" -- I thought that keeping you honestly informed in some of the things we did here would be understood as a well-intentioned effort; at least.

The particular response I got was gratifying. It seems that somewhere along the lines "unsubstantiated accusations" were made, the "reputation" of a station was damaged, and I made "an ass" of myself "and IVY".

I think this one example will get the point across. We seem to have had a misunderstanding: I accept it as such. I'm sorry it happened, and surprised that so much dirt has been thrown up by such a little shovel. But what really got my goat -- and got me to sit down and blow good network time drafting a reply, was the seemingly wide-spread idea that any station head, traffic manager, program director, or station staffer has the automatic right to draft cute notes on fancy letter-heads which drag us over the coals to the loud tune of "fucked-up" and "make an ass of yourself". It just ain't so. For a flat fee above and beyond sales percentages I'll take that kind of abuse; but I'm not aware of its being included in my present duties.

The personal decision I've made not to continue with <u>ivy newsletter</u> will lessen the chances of my "damaging" any more reputations with my obviously vicious, malicious, and assinine remarks; while at the same time giving me more time for selling.

I think intra-network communication was a good experiment; but I think that somebody with a tougher hide or a more masochistic bent should take the initiative from now on.

It feels so good when I stop.